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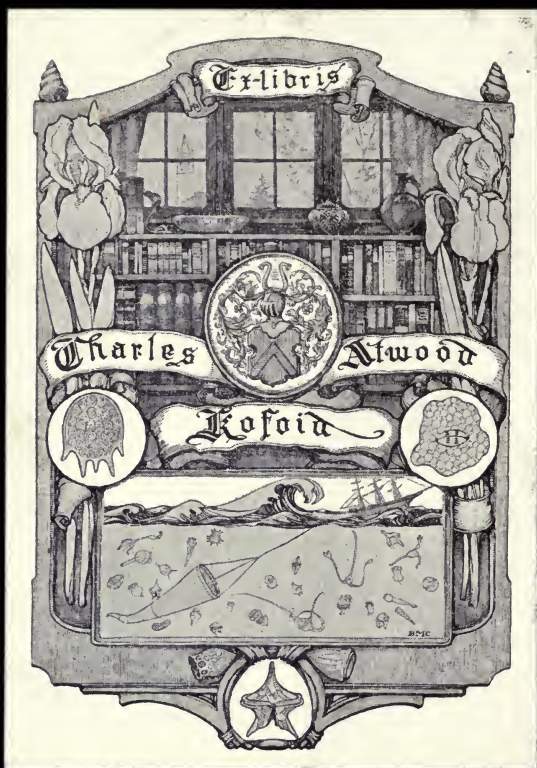
HORSES PAST AND PRESENT



BY

SIR WALTER GILBEY, BART.

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HORSES
PAST AND PRESENT





SADDLE AND PILLION.

(From "The Procession of the Flitch of Bacon," by THOMAS STOTHARD, R.A.)

HORSES
PAST AND PRESENT

BY
SIR WALTER GILBEY, BART.

ILLUSTRATED

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This brief history of the Horse in England to the close of the nineteenth century is a compilation which, it is hoped, may prove useful as well as interesting.


So much has been done to improve our breeds of horses since the year 1800, and so many and important have been the changes in our methods of travel, in the use of heavy horses in agriculture, in hunting, racing and steeplechasing, that the latter portion of the book might be amplified indefinitely.

It is not thought necessary to do more than touch briefly upon the more important events which have occurred during Her Majesty's reign.

The interesting and instructive work by Mr. Huth, which contains the titles of all the books written in all languages relating to the Horse shows that the number published up to the year 1886 exceeds 4,060 : and since that date, works on the Horse, embracing veterinary science, breeding, cavalry, coaching,

racing, hunting and kindred subjects, have been issued from the publishing houses of Europe at the rate of about two per month. During the ten years 1886-95 upwards of 232 such works were issued, and there has been no perceptible decrease during the last four years.

Under these circumstances an apology for adding to the mass of literature on the Horse seems almost necessary.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping letters that appear to be 'H' and 'L'.

*Elsenham Hall, Essex,
November, 1900.*

HORSES PAST AND PRESENT.

FIRST among animals which man has domesticated, or brought under control to do him service, stands the horse. The beauty of his form, his strength, speed and retentive memory, alike commend him to admiration ; the place he holds, whether in relation to our military strength, our commercial and agricultural pursuits, or our pleasures, is unique. Whether as servant or companion of man the horse stands alone among animals.

There can be no doubt but that the horse was broken to man's service at an early period of the world's history. The art of taming him was first practised by the peoples of Asia and Africa, who earliest attained to a degree of civilisation ; but whether he was first ridden or driven is a question which has often been debated with

no definite result. The earliest references to the use of horses occur in the Old Testament, where numerous passages make mention of chariots and horsemen in connection with all warlike operations.

BEFORE THE CONQUEST.

From very remote times England has possessed horses which her inhabitants turned to valuable account, as we find occasion to note elsewhere* ; and the farther she advanced on the path of civilisation the wider became the field for utility open to the horse. To the necessity for adapting him to various purposes, to the carrying of armour-clad soldiery, to draught, pack work, hawking, hunting, coaching, for use in mines where ponies are required, &c., we owe the several distinct breeds which we now possess in such perfection.

In early times horses were held the most valuable of all property in Britain ; we see evidence of the importance attached to them in the figures on ancient coins. The Venerable Bede states that the English first used saddle horses about the year 631, when

* *Ponies Past and Present.* By Sir Walter Gilbey, Bart, published by Vinton & Co., Limited.

prelates and other Church dignitaries were granted the privilege of riding. This statement needs qualification, for it is certain that riding was practised by the ancient Britons and their descendants ; we shall no doubt be right in reading Bede's assertion to refer to *saddles*, which were in use among the nations of Eastern Europe in the fourth century. The ancient Greek and Roman horsemen rode barebacked ; but a law in the Theodosian Code, promulgated in the fifth century, by which the weight of a saddle was limited to 60 Roman lbs., proves that saddles were then in general use in the Roman Empire.

The Saxon saddle was little more than a pad ; this would give no very secure seat to the rider, and therefore we cannot marvel that the art of fighting on horseback remained unknown in Britain until it was introduced by our Norman conquerors. Even after that epoch only the heavily-mailed knights fought from the saddle ; for some centuries subsequently the lightly armed horsemen dismounted to go into action, leaving their horses in charge of those who remained with the baggage of the army in the rear. It would be wrong to call these troops cavalry ; they employed

horses only for the sake of greater mobility, and were what in modern phrase are styled mounted infantry.

Saxons and Danes brought horses of various breeds into England, primarily to carry on their warfare against the British ; the most useful of these were horses of Eastern blood, which doubtless performed valuable service in improving the English breeds. The Saxon and Danish kings of necessity maintained large studs of horses for military purposes, but whether they took measures to improve them by systematic breeding history does not record.

King Alfred (871 to 991) had a Master of the Horse, named Ecquef, and the existence of such an office indicates that the Royal stables were ordered on a scale of considerable magnitude.

King Athelstan (925-940) is entitled to special mention, for it was he who passed the first of a long series of laws by which the export of horses was forbidden. Athelstan's law assigns no reason for this step ; but the only possible motive for such a law must have been to check the trade which the high qualities of English-bred horses had brought into existence. At no period of our history have we possessed

more horses than would supply our requirements, and Athelstan's prohibition of the export of horses beyond sea, unless they were sent as gifts, was undoubtedly due to a growing demand which threatened to produce scarcity. This king saw no objection to the importation of horses: he accepted several as gifts from Continental Sovereigns, and evidently attached much value to them, for in his will he made certain bequests of white horses and others which had been given him by Saxon friends.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR (1066-1087).

William the Conqueror brought with him many horses from Normandy when he invaded England. Many of these were Spanish horses, if we may apply to the famous Bayeux tapestry the test of comparison. William himself, at Hastings, rode a Spanish horse, which had been presented to him by his friend, Alfonso of Spain, and the riders on horseback on the tapestry show that the Norman knights rode horses similar in all respects to that of their leader. They are small, probably not exceeding 14 hands, and of course all stallions. Berenger*

* "The History and Art of Horsemanship." By Richard Berenger, Gentleman of the Horse to George III., published 1771.

describes these horses as of a class adapted to the "purposes of war and the exhibition of public assemblies."

There is nothing to tell us when horses were first used in agriculture in England; the earliest mention of such, some considerable research has revealed, is the reference to "four draught horses" owned by the proprietor of an Essex manor in the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066). Under the Norman and Plantagenet kings the plough appears to have been adapted for draught by either oxen or horses. The former undoubtedly were the more generally used, and continued in use until comparatively recent times in some parts of the country.

One of the pieces of tapestry worked in Bayonne in 1066 shows the figure of a man driving a horse harnessed to a harrow. This is the earliest pictorial evidence we possess of the employment of the horse in field labour.

The Conqueror and his followers came from a country in which agriculture was in a more advanced state than it was in England, and it cannot be doubted that the Normans did much to promote the interests of English husbandry.

WILLIAM RUFUS (1087-1100).

It was probably during the reign of William Rufus that the first endeavour to improve the British breed of horses was made. Giraldus Cambrensis informs us that Robert de Belesme brought Spanish stallions to his property in Powysland, Central Wales, and that to these importations many years afterwards the district owed its reputation for a superior stamp of horse. The results of this enterprise were certainly of a lasting character, for "a Powys horse" occurs among the purchases made by Edward II. (1272-1307), indicating clearly that the locality still produced a good stamp of animal.

HENRY I. (1100-1135).

King Henry I. would appear to have taken an interest in the work of horse-breeding. The scanty existing records of his reign contain mention of a visit paid in 1130 to the royal manor at Gillingham, in Dorsetshire, by a squire "with a stallion to leap the king's mares." In this king's reign the first Arabs were received in England from Eastern Europe, in the shape of two horses, with costly Turkish armour, as a gift. One

of these horses was retained in England and the other was sent to King Alexander I. of Scotland, who presented it to the Church of St. Andrews.

HENRY II. (1154-1189).

Henry II. took a keen interest in horses, and the records of his reign show us the system then in vogue for the maintaining the royal studs. The horses, in greater or smaller numbers, with their grooms, were placed under the charge of the Sheriffs of counties, whose duty it was to provide them with pasture, stabling, and all necessities, recovering the cost from the Exchequer. The Tournament was introduced into England in this reign; but these knightly exercises received little encouragement from the king, who forbade them under ecclesiastical pressure.

William Stephanides, a monk of Canterbury, has left us a Latin tract or pamphlet descriptive of the mounted sports of Londoners in the latter half of the twelfth century, which possesses both interest and value. From this it is evident that races of a primitive character, and sham fights of a rough and ready kind had place among the re-

creations of the people of Henry II.'s time. Smithfield, then a level expanse of grass where periodical horse markets were held, was the scene of these amusements :—

“ Every Sunday in Lent after dinner young men ride out into the fields on horses which are fit for war and excellent for their speed. The citizens' sons issue out through the gates by troops, furnished with lances and shields, and make representation of battle and exercise and skirmish. To this performance many young courtiers yet uninitiated in arms resort, and great persons to train and practice. They begin by dividing into troops; some labour to outstrip their leaders without being able to reach them; others unhorse their antagonists without being able to get beyond them. At times two or three boys are set on horseback to ride a race and push their horses to their utmost speed, sparing neither whip nor spur.” *

RICHARD I. (1189-1199).

Richard I., ignoring the opposition of the Church, which held them dangerous alike to body and soul, encouraged tournaments as valuable training for his knights; and it may here be observed that from his time through the succeeding ages until 1559, when a fatal accident to King Henry II., of France, in the lists, caused the institution to go out of fashion, tournaments were held from time to time in England. Some of our kings en-

* “ London,” by Stephanides. Leland's *Itinerary*, vol. viii.

couraged them for military reasons ; others discouraged them under Church influence, or as records show, because they were productive of loss in horses and arms, which the resources of the country could ill afford.

We find traces of the old "Justs of Peace," as tournaments were officially called, in the names of streets in London. Knightrider and Giltspur Streets, for example : the former owed its name to the circumstance that through it lay the route taken by knights on their way from the Tower to the lists at Smithfield ; the latter to the fact that the makers of the gilt spurs worn by knights carried on their business there. Cheapside was the scene of some historical tournaments, as were the Barbican and Roderwell. The Tiltyard near St. James's was the exercise ground of knights and gentlemen at a later date.

JOHN (1199-1216).

King John reigned at a period when the armour worn by mounted men was becoming stronger, and when the difficulty of finding horses powerful enough to carry heavily mailed riders was increasing. This sovereign, so far as can be discovered, was the first to make an endeavour to increase the

size of our English breed of Great Horses ; he imported from Flanders one hundred stallions of large size. The Low Countries, in the Early and Middle Ages, were the breeding grounds of the largest and most powerful horses known : and John's importations must have wrought marked influence upon the British stock. He also purchased horses in Spain which are described as Spanish *dextrarii*, or Great Horses. *Dextrarius* was the name by which the war horse was known at this period and for centuries afterwards.

EDWARD II. (1307-1327).

Edward II. devoted both energy and money to the task of improving our horses. We have record of several horse-buying commissions despatched by him to the Champagne district in France, to Italy and other parts vaguely described as "beyond seas." One such commission brought home from Lombardy thirty war horses and twelve others of the heavy type. There can be no doubt but that the foreign purchases of Edward II. were destined for stud purposes ; the more extensive purchases of his successor, Edward III., suggest that he required horses for immediate use in the ranks.

Husbandry in England was at a low ebb during the thirteenth century, but towards the end of Edward II.'s reign it began to make progress in the midland and south-western counties. The high esteem in which English wool was held caused large tracts of country to be retained as pasture for sheep for a long period, and while farmers possessed this certain source of revenue the science of cultivation was naturally neglected.

EDWARD III. (1327-1377).

Edward III., to meet the drain upon the horse supply caused by his wars with Scotland and France, bought large numbers of horses on the Continent; more, it would appear, than his Treasury could pay for, as he was at one time in the Count of Hainault's debt for upwards of 25,000 florins for horses. These were obviously the Great Horses for which the Low Countries were famous; all the animals so imported were marked or branded. Edward III. organised his remount department on a scale previously unknown in England. It was established in two great divisions under responsible officers, one of whom had charge of all the studs on the royal manors north of the Trent, the

other exercising control of those south of that boundary ; these two custodians being in their turn responsible to the Master of the Horse.

There is ample evidence to prove that Edward III. took close personal interest in horse-breeding, and it is certain that the cavalry was better mounted in his wars than it had been at any previous period. The Great Horse, or War Horse, essential to the efficiency of heavily armoured cavalry, was by far the most valuable breed and received the greatest meed of attention ; but the Wardrobe Accounts of this reign contain mention of many other breeds or classes of horse indispensable for campaigning or useful for sport and ordinary saddle work—palfreys, hackneys, hengests, and somers, coursers, trotters, hobbies, nags, and genets.

The distinction between some of these classes was probably somewhat slight. The palfrey was the animal used for daily riding for pleasure or travel by persons of the upper ranks of life, and was essentially the lady's mount, though knights habitually rode palfreys or hackneys on the march, while circumstances allowed them to put off for the time their armour. The weight of this, with the discomfort of wearing it in the cold of

winter and heat of summer, furnished sufficient reason for the knights to don their mail only when actually going into action, or on occasions of ceremony.

“Hengests and somers” were probably used for very similar purposes, as more than once we find them coupled thus : these were the baggage or transport animals, and were doubtless of no great value. “Courser” is a term somewhat loosely used in the old records ; it is applied indifferently to the war horse, to the horse used in hunting, and for daily road work, but generally in a sense that suggests speed. “Trotters,” we must assume, were horses that were not taught to amble ; and the name was distinctive at a period when all horses used for saddle by the better classes were taught that gait. Edward III.’s Wardrobe Accounts mention payment for *trammels*, the appliances, it is supposed, used for this purpose, and at a much later date in another Royal Account Book, we find an item “To making an horse to amble, 2 marks (13s. 4d.).” The amble was a peculiarly easy and comfortable pace which would strongly commend itself to riders on a long journey. Hobbies were Irish horses, small but active and enduring ; genets were Spanish horses nearly allied to, if not practically

identical with, the barbs introduced into Spain by the Moors. The animal described as a "nag" was probably the saddle-horse used by servants and camp followers.

RICHARD II. (1377-1399).

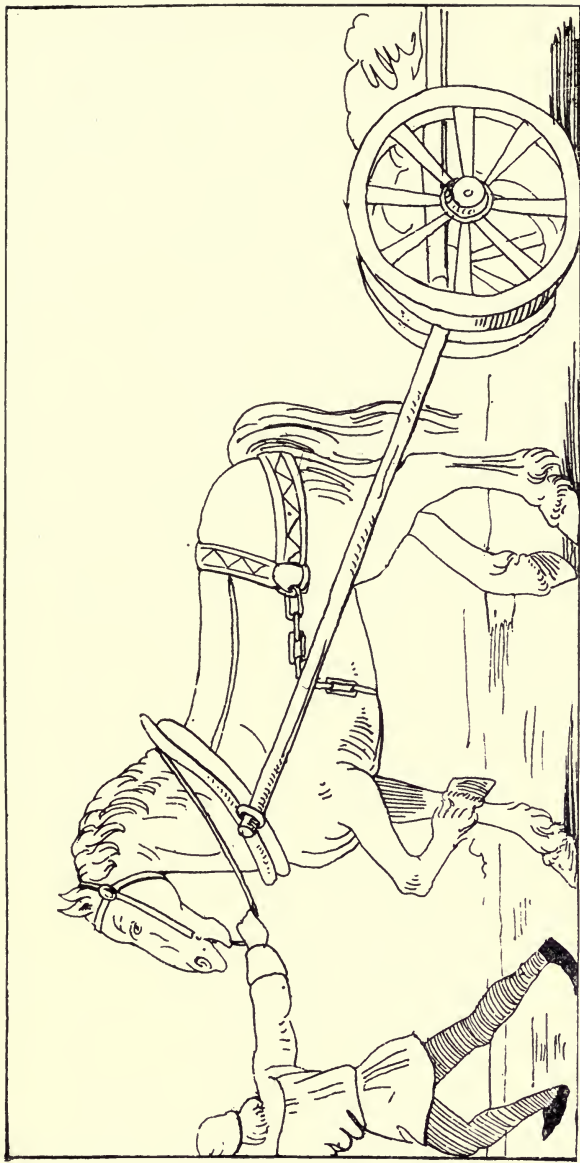
Richard II. was fond of horses and did not neglect the interests of breeding; though he on one occasion displayed his regard in a fashion which to modern minds is at least high-handed. There was a scarcity of horses in the early years of his reign, and prices rose in conformity with the law of supply and demand. Richard, considering only the needs of his knights, issued a proclamation (1386) forbidding breeders to ask the high prices they were demanding. This proclamation was published in Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire.

Passing mention may be made of an Act which was placed on the Statute Book in 1396. In those days all travelling was performed on horseback, and the equivalent of the coach or jobmaster of much later times was the hackneyman, who let out horses to travellers at rates of hire fixed by law. The hackneymen were in the very nature of their business liable to be imposed

upon by unprincipled persons, who would demand horses from them without tendering payment, on the false plea that they were royal messengers journeying in haste on business of the State. Not infrequently, too, the hirer or borrower was none other than a horse-thief, who rode the animal into some remote country town, and sold him to whoever would buy. Richard II.'s Act of 1396, aimed at suppression of these practices, laying penalties upon anyone found guilty of them; and it further called upon the hackney-men to help themselves by placing a distinctive mark on their horses. Any animal bearing such a mark might be seized by the hackneyman if he found it in possession of another, and no compensation could be claimed by the person from whose custody it was taken.

The earliest account of a race that we can trace (apart from the sports at Smithfield) refers to the year 1377, the first of Richard's reign. In that year the King and the Earl of Arundel rode a race* (particulars of conditions, distance, weights, &c., are wanting!), which it would seem was won by the Earl, since the King purchased

* "The History of Newmarket." By T. P. Hore. (3 vols.) H. Baily & Co. London, 1886.



A CART-HORSE OF THE XVth CENTURY.

From a Contemporary MS.

his horse afterwards for a sum equal to £20,000 in modern money.

For nearly a hundred years after the deposition of Richard II., the available records throw little or no light upon our subject. The Wars of the Roses (1450-1471) were productive of results injurious alike to agriculture, stock breeding, and commerce. During a period when horses for military service were in constant demand, and were liable, unless the property of some powerful noble, to seizure by men of either of the contending factions, it was not worth any man's while to breed horses, still less to try to improve them. The fifteenth century, therefore, or at least a considerable portion of it, saw retrogression rather than progress in English horse-breeding.

HENRY VII. (1485-1509).

Henry VII., in 1495, found the horse supply of the country so deficient, and the prices so high, that he passed an Act forbidding the export of any horse without Royal permission, on pain of forfeiture, and of any mare whose value exceeded six shillings and eightpence; no mare under three years old might be sent out of the

country, and on all exported a duty of six shillings and eightpence was levied.

Under the old "Statutes of Arms" Henry VII. established a force known as Yeomen of the Crown. There were fifty of these; each yeoman had a spare horse and was attended by a mounted groom. In times of peace they acted as Royal messengers carrying letters and orders. In disturbed times they formed the backbone of the militia levies.

HENRY VIII. (1509-1547).

Henry VIII. went a good deal further in his efforts to foster and promote the breeding of good horses. In 1514 he absolutely forbade the export of horses abroad, and extended the prohibition to Scotland. He obliged all prelates and nobles of a certain degree, to be ascertained by the richness of their wives' dress, to maintain stallions of a given stature. He made the theft of horse, mare, or gelding a capital offence, and deprived persons convicted under this law (37 Henry VIII., c. 8) of the benefit of clergy. And by two Acts, the gist of which will be found on page 5 *et seq.* of *Ponies Past and Present*, he made

a vigorous attempt to weed out the ponies whose small size rendered them useless.

It is to be borne in mind that the King's legislation against the animals that ran in the forests and wastes aimed definitely at the greater development and perfection of the Great Horse. Armour during Henry VIII.'s time had reached its maximum weight, and a horse might be required to carry a load of from 25 to 30 stone;* hence very powerful horses were indispensable.

Henry's interest in horseflesh was not confined to the breed on which the efficiency of his cavalry depended. He was a keen sportsman, who took a lively pleasure in all forms of sport, and he appears to have been the first king who ran horses for his own amusement. It would hardly be correct to date the beginnings of the English Turf from Henry VIII.'s reign, as the "running geldings" kept in the Royal Stables at Windsor seem to have been run only against one another in a field hired by the king for the purpose.

The *Privy Purse Expenses* contain very curious scraps of information concerning

* See *The Great Horse or War Horse* (p. 26). Third edition. By Sir Walter Gilbey, Bart. Vinton & Co., Ltd. 1899.

the running geldings, their maintenance, and that of the boys retained to ride them. There is mention of "rewardes" to the keeper of the running geldings, to the "children of the stable," and also to the "dyatter" of the running geldings. This last functionary's existence is worth notice, as it indicates some method of training or dieting the horses. Nearly seventy years later—in 1599—Gervaise Markham produced his book, "How to Chuse, Ryde and Dyet both Hunting and Running Horses."

In the year 1514, the Marquis of Mantua sent Henry VIII., from Italy, a present of some thoroughbred horses; these in all probability formed the foundation stock of our sixteenth-century racehorses. The *Privy Purse Expenses* quoted above refer to "the Barbaranto hors" and "the Barbary hors," which are doubtless the same animal. A hint that it was raced occurs in the mention of a payment to Polle (Paul, who as previous entries show, was the keeper of this horse), "by way of rewarde," 18s. 4d., and on the same day (March 17, 1532), "paid in rewarde to the boy that ran the horse, 18s. 4d."

That curious record, *The Regulations of*

the Establishment of Algernon Percy, Fifth Earl of Northumberland, which was commenced in the year 1512, gives us a very valuable glimpse of the private stud maintained by a great noble in Henry VIII.'s time. The list of the Earl's horses "that are appointed to be in the charge of the house yearly, as to say, gentell horseys, palfreys, hobys, naggis, cloth-sek hors, male hors," is as follows :—

"First, gentell horsys, to stand in my lordis stable, six. Item, palfreys of my ladis, to wit, oone for my lady and two for her gentell-women, and oone for her chamberer. Four hobys and nags for my lordis oone ('own' in this connection) saddill, viz., oone for my lord, and oone to stay at home for my lord.

"Item, chariot hors to stand in my lordis stable yerely.

"Seven great trottynge horsys to draw in the chariot and a nag for the chariott man to ride—eight. Again, hors for Lord Lerey, his lordship's son and heir. A gret doble trottynge hors called a curtal, for his lordship to ride out on out of towns. Another trottynge gambaldyn hors for his lordship to ride on when he comes into towns. An amblynge hors for his lordship to journeye on daily. A proper amblynge little nag for his lordship when he goeth on hunting and hawking. A gret amblynge gelding, or trottynge gelding, to carry his male."

In regard to these various horses, it may be added that the "gentell hors" was one of superior breeding; the chariott horse and "gret trotting horsys" were powerful cart

horses; the "curtal" was a docked great horse; the "trottynge gambaldyn" horse one with high and showy action, and the "cloth sek" and "male hors" carried respectively personal luggage and armour.

EDWARD VI. (1547-1553) AND QUEEN MARY (1553-1558).

The brief reign of Edward VI. was productive of little legislation that had reference to horse-breeding. An Act was passed to sanction the export of mares worth not more than ten shillings, and another to remove some ambiguity in Henry VIII.'s law concerning the death penalty, without benefit of clergy, for horse-stealers.

If nothing was done to promote the breeding industry during this reign, the King's advisers took measures to raise the English standard of horsemanship. The Duke of Newcastle informs us that he "engaged Regnatelle to teach, and invited two Italians who had been his scholars, into England. The King had an Italian farrier named Hemnibale, who taught more than had been known before" The farrier of old times was the veterinary surgeon—as the barber was the surgeon—and the invitations

so given show that the Royal advisers were conscious of English shortcomings. Horsemanship and the principles of stable management perhaps stood at a higher level in Italy than in any other European country at this period ; whence the choice of Italians as riding-masters.

The crime of horse-theft was so rife at this period that one of the first Acts of Queen Mary (2 & 3 Phil. & Mary, 7), passed in 1555, aimed at its suppression. A place was to be appointed in every fair for the sale of horses, and there the market toll-gatherer was to call the seller and buyer before him and register their names and addresses, with a description of the horse changing hands. Under this law the property in a stolen horse was not diverted from the lawful owner unless the horse had been publicly shown in the market for one hour ; if it had not been so exposed, the owner might seize and retain it if he discovered the horse in possession of another afterwards.

Queen Mary, by the Statute known as 4 Phil. & Mary, considerably extended the obligation to keep horses which Henry VIII. had laid upon persons of the upper and middle class ; but the object of this

law was to provide for the defences of the kingdom, and there is nothing in its clauses that would indicate desire to promote horse-breeding ; on the contrary, geldings are frequently mentioned as alternative to horses.

ELIZABETH (1558-1603).

Queen Elizabeth, herself an admirable horsewoman, was as fully imbued with the necessity for encouraging the breeding of horses as her father, Henry VIII., and she lost little time in dealing with the whole subject after her accession. Energetic measures were evidently much needed, if we may accept the statements made by Sir Thomas Chaloner, in a Latin poem written when he was ambassador at Madrid, in 1579. He observes that if Englishmen chose to devote attention to breeding, with all the advantages their country offered, they could rear better horses than they could import. England, he averred, had none but "vile and ordinary horses," which were suffered to run at large with the mares.

In the first year of her reign Elizabeth renewed Henry VIII.'s Act forbidding the export of horses to Scotland. Her next important step was taken in the fourth year

of her reign ; she issued a Proclamation in which she reminded her subjects that various laws had been made and that the penalties for disobedience would be enforced. The Proclamation announced the creation of machinery to see that her father's statute requiring nobles of prescribed degree to keep a stallion was being obeyed ; that his laws* concerning the height of mares in parks and enclosed lands, and requiring chases, forests and moors, to be periodically driven, and worthless mares, fillies and geldings found thereon destroyed, should be vigorously enforced. The law of Philip and Mary which obliged people to keep horses or geldings in conformity with the scheme for national defence, was recapitulated at length, and obedience within three months enjoined on penalty of fine.

The Queen evidently considered the laws she found on the statute book all that were necessary to ensure attention to the interests of horse-breeding ; for she refrained for many years from fresh legislation, contenting herself with Royal Proclamations in which she prescribed limits of time for her subjects to supply themselves with horses according to

* See *Ponies Past and Present*, pp. 5-6.

their legal obligation, and appointed suitable persons to see that her commands were carried out. One of these documents, issued in 1580, announces that the number of horsemen in the country shown by the returns is "much less than she looked for."

She made some changes in the existing laws, notably that passed in the thirty-second year of Henry VIII.'s reign, concerning the stature of horses in specified shires. That law applied among other counties to Cambridgeshire, Huntingdon, Northampton, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk; 8 Eliz., c. 8, passed in 1566, exempted the Isle of Ely and "other moors, marshes and fens of Cambridgeshire," and the above-mentioned counties from operation of the Act because "the said moors, of their unfirmness, moysture and wateryshnes" could not bear such big horses without danger of their "mireyng, drowning and peryshinge."

She also (31 Eliz. 12) passed another "Acte to avoyde horse stealinge," the chief feature of which was to forbid anyone unknown to the toll-taker to sell a horse in the market unless the would-be seller could produce "one sufficient and credible" witness to vouch for his respectability. The evil had grown to the proportions of a

national scandal at this time: Holinshed's account, published eleven years before this Act was passed, shows us that no horse in pasture or stable was safe.

Queen Elizabeth's reign saw important changes. The application of gunpowder to hand-firearms destroyed the protective value of heavy armour, and with heavy armour gradually went the horse required to carry it. The disappearance of the Great Horse as a charger was very slow, however. In 1685 the Duke of Newcastle published his famous work, *The Manner of Feeding, Dressing and Training of Horses for the Great Saddle, and fitting them for the Service of the Field in time of War*. The book was probably of little use to posterity, for by that time the day of the Great Horse as a charger was very near its close, if not quite at an end. The introduction of coaches was another mark of social progress; and light horses, Arab, Barb and Spanish, were in demand to improve our native breeds.

Until 1580, when carriages came into use in England, saddle horses were used by all of whatever degree. Though the side saddle had been introduced in Richard II.'s time, ladies still rode frequently on a pillion behind a gentleman or man-servant. Queen Eliza-

beth rode on a pillion behind her Master of the Horse when she went in state to St. Paul's; but when hunting or hawking she seems to have ridden her own palfrey. Coaches increased so rapidly towards the end of Elizabeth's reign that a bill was brought into the House of Lords (1601) to check their use. The measure was lost, the Lords directing the Attorney-General to frame a new bill to secure more attention to horse-breeding instead, but if this was done the bill never passed into law.

The Queen was an ardent supporter of the Turf and kept racehorses at Greenwich, Waltham, St. Albans, Eaton, Hampton Court, Richmond, Windsor and Charing Cross. Racing had become a popular amusement in the earlier years of Elizabeth's reign, and her participation in the sport was probably due in great measure to her conviction that it must prove beneficial to the breeding industry. The Roodee at Chester appears to have been one of the first public racecourses; the townspeople gave a silver bell to be run for. Racing was well established in Scotland at an earlier date; in 1552, during Edward VI.'s reign, there were races with bells as prizes.

There were races at Salisbury in 1585.

when the Earl of Cumberland won "the golden bell." In 1599, the Corporation of Carlisle took the sport under its patronage and gave silver bells. According to Comminius, who wrote about the year 1590, racing had grown out of fashion at that period ; the old sport of tilting at the quintain had been revived and was apparently a more popular spectacle. It is probable that suspension of public interest in racing was of a very temporary character, for Bishop Hall, in one of his *Satires*, published in 1599, refers to the esteem in which racehorses were then held.

Queen Elizabeth retained her love of sport and the physical ability to indulge it to an advanced age. It is said that in April, 1602, being then in her sixty-ninth year, she rode ten miles on horseback and hunted the same day.

Following the example set in Edward VI.'s reign, Sir Philip Sydney engaged two Italian experts named Prospero and Romano, to teach riding ; the Earl of Leicester, the Queen's Master of the Horse, also had among his suite an Italian horseman, named Claudio Corte, who wrote a book on the art of riding, which was published in London, in 1584. Thomas

Blundeville, of Newton Hotman, in Norfolk, ere this date, had published a curious little black-letter volume, entitled "The Art of Ryding and Breaking Great Horses" (1566), which was sold by William Seres, at "The Sygne of the Hedgehogge," in St. Paul's Churchyard. Some extracts from this very interesting little work have been given in a previous book.*

JAMES I. (1603-1625).

The feature of King James's reign was the formation of a racecourse at Newmarket, which had previously been a favourite hunting-ground of Royalty, and continued to be so, at least till James II.'s time.

Mr. J. P. Hore† says that the King probably resided at an inn known as "The Griffin," and held court there during his early visits, and that this inn subsequently became the King's own property. It is quite certain that Newmarket as a Turf centre dates from the time of James I.; he spent some days there in the year 1605,

* *The Great Horse or War Horse*. Third edition. By Sir Walter Gilbey, Bart., Vinton & Co., Ltd., 1899.

† "History of Newmarket."

and appears to have paid very frequent visits to the place to enjoy the sport he was anxious to encourage. He kept race-horses, and in his purchase of the Markham Arabian* we have evidence that he did not spare endeavour to procure the best. It is true that this horse proved a failure on the Turf; that his indifferent performance did something to discredit the Arab in the eyes of Englishmen, and no doubt contributed to check the importation of Eastern sires for racing; but his failure does not affect the fact that his purchase goes for proof of King James's desire to improve the breed of racehorses. Many foreign horses were imported into England during this reign. The Spanish horse still held its high reputation; in 1623, the Duke of

* There is some doubt concerning the price paid by the King for the Markham Arabian. The Duke of Newcastle, in *The New Method of Dressing Horses* (1667) says: "Mr. Markham sold him to King James for five hundred pounds," and this statement has been repeated by Sidney and other writers. In the *Times* of September 1, 1878, however, a correspondent signing himself "H" drew attention to the following entry in the "Records of the Exchequer:" "Item, December 20, 1616, paid to Master Markham for an Arabian Horse for His Majesty's own use £154. Item, the same paid to a man that brought the same Arabian Horse and kept him £11.

Buckingham, then at Madrid, shipped from St. Sebastian thirty-five horses, a present from the Court of Spain to the Prince of Wales. Whether these were racehorses or not records omit to tell us.

Under royal encouragement and patronage the Turf soon took its place as a national institution. Races were held at Croydon, Theobalds on Enfield Chase, and Garterly in Yorkshire, among other places, and of each of the meetings named the King was the President. James's most important studs were stabled at Newmarket, Middle Park, Eltham, Malmesbury, Nutbury and Tetbury. During this reign a silver bell and bowl were among the prizes offered at the Chester Races; the races for these were now run on St. George's Day, and the trophies then came to be known by the name of England's patron saint. Horses were regularly trained and prepared for these "bell courses;" the usual weight carried was 10 stone, and riders went to scale before starting.

In Scotland it would appear that betting on races was carried on to an extent that called for legislative interference; for in 1621 the Parliament at Edinburgh passed an Act which required any man who might

win over 100 marks in twenty-four hours "at cards, dice, or wagering on horse races," to make over the surplus to the kirk for the benefit of the poor.

Apart from the fostering care James I. bestowed upon the Turf, the only proceedings that require mention are: his Proclamation issued in 1608, which notified that the laws against the export of horses were not being obeyed, and would thenceforward be enforced; and his repeal in 1624 of Henry VIII.'s law obliging every person whose wife wore "any French hood or bonnet of velvet" to keep a stallion. He also repealed 32 Henry VIII., so far as it applied to Cornwall (21 Jac. I., c. 28), even as Queen Elizabeth had relieved some Eastern and Midland counties from operation of that law, in view of their unsuitability to breed heavy horses.

CHARLES I. (1625, Behd. 1649).

Charles I. inherited, to some extent, his father's taste for the Turf, and combined therewith a love of the *manège*, due to his own accomplished horsemanship. The interest in racing was now so general, and the inducement to breed light and swift

horses for the purpose so great, that other classes of horse were neglected, to the alarm of the more far-seeing among the King's subjects. So seriously was the tendency to breed only light horses regarded, that Sir Edward Harwood presented a memorial to Charles, in which it was pointed out that there was a great deficiency in the kingdom of horses of a useful type, and praying that steps should be taken to encourage the breeding of horses for service, and racing discouraged. Charles would seem to have been conscious that excessive attention to breeding light horses was a national question ; at all events, that animals of a more generally useful stamp were scarce ; for in 1641 he granted licenses for the importation of horses, enjoining the licensees to import coach horses, mares, and geldings not under 14 hands, and between the ages of three and seven years.

In November, 1627, Charles issued his Proclamation forbidding the use of snaffles, except for hunting and hawking ("in times of Disport"), and requiring all riders to use bits. His motive was, no doubt, a desire to encourage the *manège*, which was then considered the highest form of horsemanship. The King and the Queen had

separate establishments, and each kept a large number of horses, including race-horses. The English system of stable management had made such advances at this time that Marshal Bassompierre, the French Ambassador in London, refers to it in his memoirs, and recommends that English methods be followed in France. The same writer speaks, too, of the superiority of English horses.

The hackney-coach question came up again in this reign, and Charles issued a Proclamation dealing with the subject in January, 1636. He forbade the use of coaches in London and Westminster unless they were about to make a journey of at least three miles; and he required every owner of a coach to keep four horses for the King's service. We may conjecture that his prohibition of hackney coaches was not the outcome of a desire to encourage horsemanship; for about eighteen months later he granted to his Master of the Horse, James, Marquis of Hamilton, power to license fifty hackney coachmen in London and the suburbs and convenient places in other parts of the realm. This license, granted by Proclamation in July, 1637, suggests favouritism, as according to a con-

temporary publication * there were in 1636 over 6,000 coaches, private and public, in London and the suburbs: surely more than were needed, as some 10,000 odd hansoms and four-wheelers meet London's normal requirements to-day.

Thomas D'Urfey's song,† "Newmarket," which is thought to have been written in the reign of Charles I., shows that Newmarket was then, as now, regarded as the headquarters of the Turf.

THE COMMONWEALTH (1649-1659).

Mr. Christie Whyte, in his *History of the English Turf*, says:—"Oliver Cromwell, with his accustomed sagacity, perceiving the vast benefit derived to the nation by the improvement of its breed of horses, the natural consequence of racing, patronised this peculiarly national amusement, and we find accordingly that he kept a racing stud." If Cromwell kept a racing stable it was before he took the style of "Lord Protector," in December, 1653; for in February, 1654, he issued his first Proclamation against racing, in the shape of a prohibition for six

* *Coach and Sedan.*

† *Pills to Purge Melancholy.*

months, which prohibition was repeated in July. In subsequent years, by the same means, he made racing, cock-fighting, bear-baiting, and gambling, illegal.

Owing what he did to his cavalry, it was only to be expected that he should devote attention to the matter of remounts. He imported many Arabs, Barbs, and other horses suitable for the lightly armoured troops which had now replaced the knight-hood of former days ; he also took measures to encourage the breeding of horses for hunting and hawking, sports in which he himself indulged.

At what date stage-coaches began to supersede the old waggons, which (apart from saddle and pack horses) were the only means of journeying in England in Queen Elizabeth's time, is not known. In the year 1610, a Pomeranian speculator was granted a royal patent for fifteen years to run coaches and waggons between Edinburgh and Leith ;* but not until the end of the Commonwealth (May, 1659) do we find definite mention of a stage coach in England in the diary of a Yorkshire clergyman.†

* "Remarks on the Early Use of Carriages in England," *Archæologia*, 1821.

† *Ibid.*

This diary shows that stage coaches and waggons were then plying between London and Coventry, London and Aylesbury, London and Bedford, and on other roads.

It is highly improbable that there existed any horses of the coaching stamp at this period ; on the contrary, the wretched condition of the roads until late in the eighteenth century,* and the time occupied on a journey, indicates that animals of the Great Horse breed were used to drag the ponderous vehicles through the mud.

CHARLES II. (1660-1685).

After the gloom of the Commonwealth the nation was ripe for such changes in its social life as came in with the Restoration. Newmarket, which had been deserted during the civil war and the rule of Cromwell, recovered its former position as the headquarters of racing under the patronage of Charles II. The King entered his horses in his own name, and came to see them run, residing at the King's House when he visited Newmarket. He did away with the bell as a prize, substituting a bowl or cup of

* "Carriages: Their First Use in England," by Sir Walter Gilbey ; *Live Stock Journal Almanac*, 1897.

the value of a hundred guineas, upon which the name and pedigree of the winner was engraved. He also devoted considerable attention to improving the English race-horse ; he sent his Master of Horse abroad to purchase stallions and brood mares, principally Arabs, Barbs and Turkish horses. To these "King's mares," as they were entitled, our modern racehorse traces his descent on the dam's side.

Charles II.'s love of racing was not satisfied by the meetings at Newmarket, which was not readily accessible from Windsor, and he instituted races on Datchet Mead, within sight of the castle, across the Thames. Here, as at Newmarket, he encouraged the sport by the presentation of cups and bowls. Burford Races owed the prestige they long enjoyed to the encouragement of Charles II. in 1681. Political considerations required that public attention should be diverted for the time, if possible, and to secure this end Charles had all his best horses brought from Newmarket for the occasion.

The only piece of legislation that demands notice is the repeal of the laws against export, which had been on the Statute Book since Henry VII.'s reign. The prohibition

was cancelled and a duty of 5s. per head imposed on every horse sent over sea.

As proving the wide interest now taken in racing, the publication in 1680 of a curious little book called *The Compleat Gamester*, may be mentioned. This gives very full and minute instructions for the preparation and training of racehorses.

Stage coaches and waggons increased in number during Charles II.'s reign. There is among the *Harleian Miscellany* (vol. viii.) a tract dated 1673, in which the writer adduces several reasons for the suppression of coaches, "especially those within 40, 50, or 60 miles off London." His first reason for objecting to the coach is that it works harm to the nation "by destroying the breed of good horses, the strength of the nation, and making men careless of attaining to good horsemanship, a thing so useful and commendable in a gentleman." Charles apparently did not share this opinion; at all events, he gave countenance to the coach-building industry by founding, in 1677, the Company of Coach and Coach Harness Makers.*

* *History of the Art of Coach Building.* By Geo. A. Thrupp, London, 1876.

We may pass over the brief reign of James II. (1685-1688), as it was marked by nothing of importance bearing on our subject.

WILLIAM III. (1689-1702).

The first year of this reign saw the importation of the first of the Eastern sires which contributed to found the modern breed of racehorses—the Byerley Turk. The Oglethorpe Arabian arrived about the same time. The Turf was growing in importance and popularity; and we find that a gold bowl was one of the prizes offered at the Newmarket meeting of 1689. King William took personal interest in racing, and kept a stud under the charge of the famous Tregonwell Frampton, who filled the office of Keeper of the Running Horses under Queen Anne, George I. and George II. The King seems often to have visited Newmarket, and he encouraged other meetings—Burford, for example—by his presence.

He was keenly alive to the importance of encouraging horsemanship; sharing, perhaps, the view held by many persons at this period that the general use of stage coaches and carriages was likely to lead to

loss of proficiency in the saddle. He established a riding school, placing in charge Major Foubert, a French officer, whom he invited to England for the purpose. At the same time he recognised that travelling on wheels would increase in popularity, and took such measures as he might to prevent the breed of horses from degenerating. His Act of 1694 (5 and 6 Wm. and M., c. 22), granting licenses to 700 hackney coaches, four-wheel carriages, now called cabs, in London and Westminster, contains a clause forbidding the use of any horse, gelding or mare under 14 hands in hackney or stage coach.

The increasing numbers of people who travelled by stage coach had brought the highwayman into flourishing existence, and 4 of Wm. and M. c. 8, to encourage the apprehension of these gentry, gave the taker of a highwayman the horse, arms, and other property of the thief. In the tenth year of his reign another Act was passed (10 Wm. III., c. 12) which made horse stealers liable to the penalty of branding on the cheek; this enactment, however, was repealed in 1706 by Queen Anne (6 Anne, 9), who substituted burning in the hand for a penalty which declared the sufferer's character to all who saw him.

William, by legislation, endeavoured to procure improvements in the public highways, whose condition in many parts had become dangerous “by reason of the great and many loads which are weekly drawn through the same.” The records of subsequent years, however, showed that the state of the roads continued to leave much to be desired.

QUEEN ANNE (1702-1714).

The arrival in England of the Darley Arabian in 1706 was a fit opening of the era of prosperity on the Turf which dawned in Anne's time. The Queen, from the beginning of her reign, evinced her desire to promote racing, and added several royal plates to those already in existence—at the instance, says Berenger,* of her consort, Prince George of Denmark, who is said to have been exceedingly fond of the Turf. A writer in the *Sporting Magazine* of 1810 gives the following account of the circumstances under which the royal plates were given:—

* *The History and Art of Horsemanship.* By Richard Berenger, London, 1771.

“ . . . Gentlemen went on breeding their horses so fine for the sake of shape and speed only. Those animals which were only second, third or fourth rates in speed were considered to be quite useless. This custom continued until the reign of Queen Anne, when a public spirited gentleman (observing inconvenience arising from this exclusiveness) left thirteen plates or purses to be run for at such places as the Crown should appoint. Hence they are called the King's or Queen's Plates or Guineas. They were given upon the condition that each horse, mare or gelding should carry twelve stone weight, the best of three heats over a four-mile course. By this method a stronger and more useful breed was soon raised ; and if the horse did not win the guineas, he was yet strong enough to make a good hunter. By these crossings—as the jockeys term it—we have horses of full blood, three-quarters blood, or half bred, suitable to carry burthens ; by which means the English breed of horses is allowed to be the best and is greatly esteemed by foreigners.”

Whether the money for the royal plates was provided, as Berenger states, from the Queen's own purse, at the instance of her consort, or whether it came from the estate of the public spirited gentleman referred to by the contributor to the *Sporting Magazine*, the fact remains that these plates were established in Anne's reign, and that they did something to encourage the production of a better stamp of horse. An animal able to carry twelve stone three four-mile heats must be one of substance, and not merely a racing machine.

Much attention would seem to have been given to the mounting of our cavalry and the general efficiency of that arm by Anne's generals. Col. Geo. Denison, in his *History of Cavalry* (London, 1877), says that the battle of Blenheim in 1704 was almost altogether decided by the judicious use of cavalry, while at Ramillies in 1706, and Malplaquet, the cavalry played a very important part in the operations.

In the later years of her reign the Queen's interest in racing became still more apparent; she gave her first Royal gold cup, value 60 guineas, in 1710; and yet more plates: further, she ran horses in her own name at York and elsewhere.

There was little change on the "Road" during Anne's time; springs of steel had replaced the leather straps used in England until about 1700, but the coaches, improved in minor details, were still ponderous and required powerful teams to draw them. The Queen's own state coach was drawn by six mares of the Great Horse, or as it should be called in connection with the period under survey, the Shire Horse breed. Oxen were used in the slow stage waggons, as appears from the laws passed by William III. and Anne. The law of the latter

sovereign (6 Anne, cap. 56) enacted that not more than six horses or oxen might be harnessed to any vehicle plying on the public roads except to drag them up hills; and this latter indulgence was withdrawn three years later (1710), leaving the team of six to negotiate hills as they might. Hackney coachmen evidently displayed a tendency to evade their legal obligations in the matter of size in their horses; for in 1710 another Act (9 Anne, c. 16) was passed to the same effect as a former law, requiring hackney-coach horses to be not less than 14 hands in height.

GEORGE I. (1714-1727).

During the first seventy years of the eighteenth century Eastern horses were imported in large numbers; there is in existence a list of 200 stallions which were sent to this country, but that number does not represent a tithe of the whole. The event of George I.'s reign, from a Turf point of view, was, of course, the arrival, in 1724, of the Godolphin Arabian, the sire to which our racers of to-day owe so much. George I. appears to have taken little personal interest in the Turf, though



THE DARLEY-ARABIAN (Foaled 1702).

at least one visit paid by him to Newmarket, in October 1717, is recorded; nor does the parliamentary history of his brief reign show that much attention was given to the work of improving our horses.

The science of travel had gone back rather than forward, for in 1715 the post from London to Edinburgh took six days, whereas in 1635 it took three. At this time, and until 1784, the mails were carried by boys on horseback; and between the badness of the roads, the untrustworthiness of the boys, and the wretched quality of the horses supplied them, the postal service was both slow and uncertain. The Post Office still held the monopoly (first granted in 1603) of furnishing post-horses at a rate of threepence a mile, and its control over its subordinates was of the slightest.

The only Act of George I.'s reign relating to horses was that of 1714 (1 George I., c. 11), which forbade waggoners, carriers, and others, from drawing any vehicle "with more than four horses in length."

The omission of reference to oxen in this connection may indicate that for draught purposes on the highways they were going out of use.

GEORGE II. (1727-1760).

An important step was taken in regard to the Turf by George II. in 1740; some of its provisions will be found in *Ponies Past and Present* (pp. 8 and 9), but it contained other clauses of a far-reaching character. This law (13 Geo. II., c. 19) provided that every horse entered for a race must be *bonâ fide* the property of the person entering it, and that one person might enter only one horse for a race on pain of forfeiture. The weights to be carried were prescribed:

A 5-year-old was to carry 10 stone.

A 6-year-old „ „ 11 stone.

A 7-year-old „ „ 12 stone.

Any horse carrying less was to be forfeited and his owner fined £200. Every race was to be finished on the day it began, that is to say, all heats were to be run off in one day. The Act went even further. It declared that matches might be run for a stake of under £50, only at Newmarket and Black Hambleton in Yorkshire, under a penalty of £200 for disobedience. Prizes elsewhere were to be of an intrinsic value of at least £50, and entrance money was to go to the second horse.

So drastic a measure as this could not

long be upheld in a free and sport-loving country; and it is without surprise we find the Government, five years later, withdrawing from a position which must have made it excessively unpopular. The next law (18 Geo. II., c. 34, sec. xi.) opens with the announcement that, whereas the thirteen Royal Plates of 100 guineas value each, annually run for, as also the high prices that are continually given for horses of strength and size are sufficient to encourage breeders to raise their cattle (*sic*) to the utmost size and strength possible, "Therefore it shall be lawful to run any match for a stake of not less than £50 value at any weights whatsoever and at any place or places whatsoever."

The effect of this "climbing down" measure was naturally to introduce lighter weights. Thus in 1754, to take an example that presents itself, Mr. Fenwick's Match'em won the Ladies' Plate of 126 guineas at York carrying nine stone, as a five-year-old; six-year-olds carrying 10 stone, four-mile heats; and in 1755 Match'em beat Trajan at Newmarket carrying 8 stone 7 lbs. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the Act of 1745 was the first step towards modern light-weight racing. It must be

added that the scale of weights prescribed for the Royal Plates was as follows:—

4-year-olds carried 10 stone 4 lb.

5-year-olds „ 11 „ 6 „

6-and aged „ 12 „

Races decided in 4-mile heats.

The King himself lent a somewhat perfunctory support to the Turf, keeping at Hampton Court a grey Arab stallion, whose services were available for mares at a stated fee.

A most important event in the history of the Turf marks George II.'s reign. The Jockey Club was founded, and its existence first received public recognition in Mr. John Pond's *Sporting Kalendar*, published at the end of 1751 or the beginning of 1752. It is probable, however, that the club was actually in existence in the year 1750; but it was started without any attempt at publicity, and, so far as can be ascertained, with no idea whatever of acquiring the despotic power which eventually came into its hands. As Mr. Robert Black, in *The Jockey Club and its Founders*, remarks:

“What more natural than that the noblemen and gentlemen who frequented Newmarket, where ruffians and blacklegs were wont to congregate, should conceive the notion of forming themselves into a body apart, so that they might have at Newmarket as

well as in London and elsewhere a place of their own, to which not every blackguard who could pay a certain sum of money would have as much right as they to claim entrance."

The conjecture is a most plausible one; but it was not long before the Club showed that it intended to support racing in practical fashion, for at the Newmarket meeting in May, 1753, two Jockey Club Plates were given for horses belonging to members of the Club.

It is stated that, in the year 1752, sixty throughbred stallions, of which only eight were reputed imported Arabs, were standing for service in various parts of England; fees, as may be supposed, were low. A horse named Oronooka headed the list at a fee of 20 guineas; another, Bolton Starling, covered at $8\frac{1}{2}$ guineas; but the usual charge was one, two or three guineas. Flying Childers in the earlier part of the century stood at 50 guineas, then at 100 guineas, and one season at 200 guineas.

There is little to note concerning the "Road" or other spheres of equine work during this reign. The roads were as bad as ever, and travel was so slow that in 1740 Metcalf, the blind road-maker, walked the 200 miles from London to Harrogate more

quickly than Colonel Liddell could cover the distance in his coach with post-horses. The barbarous methods of training cavalry recruits at this period was attracting notice, as we learn from a little work on *Military Equitation*, by Henry Earl of Pembroke, which was published in 1761. The writer refers to the "wretched system of horsemanship at present prevailing in the army," and refers to the common method of putting a man on a rough trotting horse, to which he is obliged to stick with all his might of arms and legs." Most of the officers, he says, when on horseback are a disgrace to themselves and the animals they ride; and he proceeds to urge the adoption of methods based on practical common sense.

GEORGE III. (1760-1820.)

The laws concerning horses made by the Parliaments of George III. have bearing on the subject of breeding and improvement, inasmuch as they deal with the horse as taxable property. The turf, road, and hunting history of the reign is important, the first particularly so, though the King himself took little personal interest in racing. "Give and Take" plates for horses from 12 to 15 hands were in fashion during the latter part of the



JACOB BATES, THE TRICK RIDER.

(About 1750.)

last century, George II. s Act directed against small racehorses notwithstanding. A 12-hand pony carried 5 stone, and the scale of weight for inches prescribed 14 oz. for each additional quarter of an inch ; whereby 13 hands carried 7 stone, 14 hands 9 stone, 15 hands 11 stone. Hunter races were run at Ascot in 1722, and after that date the *Calendar* of 1762, however, is the first of the series that contains the form of "Qualification for a Hunter."

The Royal Plates were still among the most important events of the Turf ; in 1760 there were 18 of these in England and Scotland, and 6 in Ireland, 5 of the latter in Kildare. The "King's Plate Articles," which appear in every annual issue of the *Racing Calendars* for very many years, were retained in their original form. "Six-year-olds shall carry 12 stone, 14 lbs. to the stone ; three heats" ; but in the *Calendar* of 1773 a footnote occurs, "By a late order altered to one heat." Nevertheless, very cursory inspection of the books shows that much latitude was allowed in weights, distances, and numbers of heats both before 1773 and after. In 1799 another footnote appears under the "King's Plate Articles," to effect that the conditions "By a late order are altered to

one heat and different weights are appointed." In spite of this order races for the plates were on occasion still run in two or three heats, apparently by permission of the Master of the Horse. We are not informed what weight the new scale required, but the pages of the *Calendar* show they were reduced; authoritative information on the point appears with the Articles at a later date. In 1807 the number of Royal Plates had been increased to 23 in Great Britain.

On the 4th May, 1780, the first Derby was run; the value of the stake was 50 guineas, and the race, open to three-year-old colts at 8 stone, and fillies at 7 stone 11 lbs., distance one mile, was won by Diomed. In 1801, 1803, 1807, and 1862, the weights for the Derby were altered, always increasing by a few pounds, till they reached their present level. By 1793, the Derby had grown into great popularity. The establishment of the St. Leger, in 1776, and the Oaks in 1779, are events which also aid to make King George III.'s reign memorable. Races for Arab produce occur on the Newmarket "cards" about the time our classic races were founded; sweepstakes of 100 guineas being run for in 1775, 1776, and 1777. Races for Arabs, however, have never been continued for many years in succession.



After J. N. Sartorius

GREY DIOMED, foaled 1785. By Diomed—Grey Dorimant.
Bred by Sir CHARLES BUNBURY, Bart.

The accompanying portrait of Grey Diomed, a son of Diomed, the winner of the first Derby, in 1780, gives a good idea of the racehorse of this period. Grey Diomed was foaled in 1785, and won many important races between the years 1788 and 1792. He was bred at Great Barton, Bury St. Edmunds, by Sir Charles Bunbury.

It was in 1780 that Mr. William Childe, of Kinlet, "Flying Childe," introduced the modern method of riding fast to hounds. Prior to Mr. Childe's time, men rode to hounds in a fashion we should consider slow and over-cautious, timber being taken at a stand; but once the superior excitement of fast riding across country was realised, the old, slow method soon disappeared.

Though the Norfolk Hackney achieved its fame through Blaze (foaled 1733), who begat the original Shales, foaled in 1755, and the foundations of this invaluable breed were thus laid in George II.'s time, we must have regard to the period during which the breed achieved its celebrity both at home and abroad, and that period is the long reign of George III.

The old system of conveying mails on horseback, with its innumerable faults and drawbacks, came to an end in George III.'s

time, a mail coach making its first trip in August, 1784, when the journey from Bristol to London, about 119 miles, was performed in 17 hours, or at a rate of 7 miles per hour. The era of macadamised roads, which was followed by the short "golden age" of fast coaching, can hardly be said to belong to this reign, Mr. Macadam's system of road-making having been generally adopted only in 1819.

The founding of the Royal Veterinary College at Camden Town in 1791 was by no means the least important event of this reign; it is not too much to say that it marked an epoch in the history of the Horse; for the establishment of this institution made an end of the quackery, often exceedingly cruel, which for centuries had passed for medical treatment of animals. Until the end of the eighteenth century English veterinary practitioners had been content to follow in the footsteps of such teachers as Gervaise Markham, who was the great authority on equine diseases two hundred years before: and the principles and practice of Gervaise Markham were hardly free from the taint of witchcraft and sorcery. Some of the more drastic and obviously useless remedies had been discredited and abandoned, but at the

period of which we write, English veterinarians appear to have been following their own way regardless of the more enlightened methods which were beginning to gain acceptance among the advanced practitioners of France. For to the French is due the credit of laying the first foundations on which scientific veterinary surgery was built.

The helplessness of the old school is proved by the ravages of epizootics. The loss of horses and other live stock when contagious disease gained footing was enormous, such diseases being entirely beyond the understanding of veterinarians. The last half of the eighteenth century saw the establishment of veterinary colleges in Europe. Lyons led the way in 1761; the next to be founded was that of Alfort near Paris in 1765; the next, Copenhagen, in 1773; Vienna, 1775; Berlin, 1790, and London, as already mentioned, in 1791.

Study of animal diseases was stimulated by the invasion of deadly plagues, which wrought such havoc that stock-raising in some countries threatened to disappear as an industry. Knowledge of these plagues and efficient remedies had become essential to the existence of horse and cattle breeding, and the collection of facts and correct views

concerning such diseases was the greatest task of the veterinary colleges : the progress made was necessarily slow ; but the foundation of veterinary surgery as a science dates from the establishment of the colleges named. For many years the new school of veterinarians were groping in the dark ; but if they made no striking advance they did valuable work in collecting facts and correct views concerning animal diseases, which were of great value to a later generation.

The Royal Veterinary College was founded by a Frenchman named Charles Vial de St. Bel, or Sainbel. Sainbel was born at Lyons in 1753. His talents developed early in life, and after a brief but brilliantly successful career in France he came over to England in 1788. He published proposals for founding a Veterinary School in this country, but his suggestions were not favourably received, and he returned home. Perhaps the fact that he had married an Englishwoman during his short residence on this side of the Channel influenced Sainbel in his choice of refuge when the Revolution threatened ; but however that may be, it was to London that he repaired when political unrest in Paris bade him seek a new sphere of activity.

By a stroke of good fortune Mr. Dennis O'Kelly selected the young French veterinary surgeon to dissect the carcase of the great race-horse Eclipse in February, 1789. Sainbel did the work, and wrote an "Essay on the Geometrical Proportions of Eclipse," which attracted immediate notice and established his reputation as a veterinary anatomist.

He still cherished his scheme for founding a Veterinary School, and his abilities now being recognised, it was taken up by the Odiham Agricultural Society. In 1791 Sainbel had the satisfaction of seeing the school established, in the shape of a farriery with stabling for fifty horses. He did not live to see the success that was destined to attend his enterprise, as he died in 1793 in his fortieth year. During the two years of his work as principal, however, he had laid down the lines on which scientific veterinary practice should be conducted; in the words of his biographer, "Sainbel may justly be looked upon as the founder of scientific veterinary practice in England" (*Dictionary of National Biography*).

GEORGE IV. (1820-1830).

In George IV. the Turf had, perhaps, the

most ardent supporter it ever boasted among our sovereigns, though the unfortunate Escape affair caused him to renounce the sport altogether for many years (1791-1810): The King was passionately fond of horses, and never wearied of trying hacks and hunters; he got together a splendid breeding stud at Hampton Court. In the last year of his reign he increased the number of Royal Plates to 43, of which 27 were run for in England, Scotland and Wales, and 16 in Ireland: he was also instrumental in bringing about vast improvements in the royal buckhounds. The legislative measures of George IV. were a bill to entirely relieve agricultural horses from taxation, the duties thereon having been reduced by George III. in the last year of his reign; and a bill to relieve horses let for travelling of the duties that had been imposed upon them by his father.

WILLIAM IV. (1830-1837).

William IV. had no great love of racing, and his personal attitude towards the sport is well reflected in his oft-quoted order to "start the whole fleet" for the Goodwood Cup of 1830. He was, however, fully alive to the national importance of racing, and did

something to encourage it, presenting the Jockey Club in 1832 with one of the hoofs of Eclipse set in gold, which, with £200 given by himself, was to be run for annually by horses the property of members. "The Eclipse Foot" appears to have brought fields for only four years, and then remained an ornament of the Jockey Club rooms at Newmarket.

In the same year, 1832, a new schedule of weights was appended to the Articles for the King's Plates; this shows that the weights to be carried varied somewhat according to the places where the races were run. No scale was prescribed for Newmarket, the conditions being left for settlement by the Jockey Club. In 1837, the last year of William's reign, the number of Royal Plates had again increased and stood at 48, 34 in England and Scotland, 14 in Ireland.

The king continued the breeding stud at Hampton Court which his brother had bequeathed to him; if his affection for the Turf was slight, he deserves the greater credit for having maintained it.

The reign of William IV. saw the coaching age at its best, for rapid travel by road was raised to a science only a few years before its extinction by the introduction of

railways. Good roads, good horses and improved coaches in combination rendered it possible to cover long distances at a uniformly high speed, from 10 to 10½ miles per hour being the rate at which the mails ran between London and Exeter, London and York, and other important centres.

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

ACC. JUNE 20, 1837.

The sale of the Hampton Court Stud is the first noteworthy event of Her Majesty's reign. The step taken by the Queen's advisers, with Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister, at their head, was deeply regretted by all interested in horse breeding, as one seeming to imply that the national sport would no longer receive the patronage of the Throne. A respectful but strong memorial against the sale was presented by the Jockey Club, but without avail, and on October 25, 1837, Messrs. Tattersall disposed of the stud before a crowded audience, which included buyers from France, Germany, Russia, and other foreign countries. The catalogue included 43 brood mares, which brought 9,568 guineas; 13 colt foals, 1,471 guineas; 18 filly foals, 1,109 guineas; and 5 stallions,

including *The Colonel* and *Actæon* and two imported Arabs, 3,556 guineas.

Actuated by patriotic motives and unwilling that so fine a horse should go abroad, Mr. Richard Tattersall bought *The Colonel* for 1,600 guineas ; a price which was then considered a very large one. The total realised by sale of the stud, including a couple of geldings, was 15,692 guineas. Thirteen years later, in 1850, the clear-sightedness of H.R.H. the Prince Consort, saw that the dispersal had been a mistake, and that year saw the foundation of a new stud which flourished until 1894, when it was sent to the hammer. Regarding this second dispersal, it was urged that the stud did not pay its expenses ; and although it produced *The Earl*, *Springfield* and *La Flèche*, good judges, including the late General Peel, were of opinion that the ground, on which for so many years Thoroughbreds had been reared, was tainted and therefore needed rest.

In 1840 the fifth Duke of Richmond brought in a bill to repeal those clauses of 13 George II. which still remained on the Statute Book limiting the value of stakes, and this measure passed into law, not without opposition (3 and 4 Vic. 5). Some interesting evidence bearing on our subject

was given before the Select Committee on Gaming which was appointed in 1844. Mr. John Day gave it as his opinion that the breed of horses had much improved during the twenty to twenty-five years preceding, the improvement being apparent in riding and draught horses. Mr. Richard Tattersall shared Mr. Day's opinion as regarded improvement, but thought fewer horses were bred. About 1836 or 1837 farmers were in such a state that they could not, or did not think it worth while to breed; by consequence the industry had fallen off and there was a scarcity. Railways, in Mr. Tattersall's opinion, had affected the market. "The middling sort does not sell in consequence of railways; horses that used to fetch £40 now bring £17 or £18." Riding horses sold better than the middling class, but hunters did not fetch half the price they did in former years.

The result of this investigation, as far as the horse question is concerned, was briefly summarised in the following passage of the Third Report of the Lords' Committee. They thought it desirable that this amusement should be upheld, "because, without the stimulus which racing affords, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to maintain



HUNTER SIRE COGNAC.

(From a Painting by J. E. FERNELEY, about 1826.)

that purity of blood and standard of excellence which have rendered the breed of English horses superior to that of any other country in the world."

The last statement was borne out by Mr. Tattersall's evidence. He said that he had sent horses to every part of the world except China. America and the countries of Europe have been purchasing the best stallions and mares money could buy in England during the last hundred years and more.

In 1845 the number of Queen's Plates stood at 51; 36 in Great Britain and 15 in Ireland. In 1861 the scale of weights was remodelled and made applicable to all the Plates wherever run; and in the same year it was enacted that "none of Her Majesty's Plates shall be run in heats."

Some few abortive attempts to control racing by law have been made since Her Majesty's accession. In 1860 Lord Redesdale introduced into the House of Lords a bill to stop light-weight racing by fixing the minimum weight at 7 stone. This measure was withdrawn, Lord Derby and Lord Granville, also a member of the Jockey Club and leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords, promising on behalf of the Jockey Club that that body was prepared to deal

with the matter ; but nothing was done in the direction indicated.

In May, 1870, Mr. Thomas Hughes, the member for Frome, brought in a bill to amend the laws relating to racing. This bill proposed to make it unlawful to race any horse or mare under three years old, and to make the Queen's Plates open only to horses four years old and upwards. Mr. Hughes, in introducing his measure, said that between 1843 and 1868 the number of two-year-olds running had increased fourfold, while the number of races of a mile and upwards had decreased, and urged that the system which had grown up tended to cause deterioration in the breed of horses. As was well known at the time, Mr. Hughes was indebted for his facts and figures to Sir Joseph Hawley. This bill was read a first time by 132 votes to 44, but was withdrawn in the following July.

Great and radical changes had come over the Turf during the twenty-five years mentioned by Mr. Hughes, but they were only incidental to the general process of Turf development which has been going on since the advent of the railway.

In 1836 the travelling van was first

used for conveying a horse from training quarters to the race course. Lord George Bentinck, who managed Lord Lichfield's racing stable, resolved at the last moment to run Elis in the St. Leger, and astonished the betting fraternity by producing him at Doncaster in time for the race ; to do this he had borrowed a van which had been constructed to carry fat cattle to Smithfield Show. The fact that Elis won the St. Leger to which he had been brought in this, then novel, fashion no doubt did something to stimulate the practice of transporting race horses thus ; but the van was gradually superseded by the horse-box, which was first employed for the purpose about 1840.

Railways, as they spread over the country, did much to increase the number of meetings held and to increase the numbers of entries. We find that in the period between 1827 and 1837 the number of horses running increased from 1,166 in the former year to 1213 in the latter ; while during the period between 1860, when railroads had become numerous, and 1870, the number of horses running rose from 1,717 in the former year to 2,569 in the latter.

The development of the daily sporting press and the spread of the telegraph system

have also contributed to the changes on the Turf. By quickening the interest of the people in racing, these factors have helped to increase the attendance on race courses, and at "gate money meetings," to enhance the funds at the disposal of promoters, whereby the latter are able to offer in prize money sums beyond the conception of our grandfathers in the early years of the century.

With the increase in the number of meetings, of horses running and the value of prizes, other changes have gradually crept in. The Challenge Whip remains the solitary survival of the old four-mile races. The Whip, it may be well to remind the reader, was originally the property of Thomas Lennard, Lord Dacre, whose arms are engraved upon it. Lord Dacre was created Earl of Sussex in 1674 by Charles II.: he was devoted to the Turf, and it is believed that he left his Whip (a short, heavy, old-fashioned jockey-whip with hair from the tail of Eclipse interwoven into the ring on the handle) as a trophy to be run for at Newmarket. He died in 1715, but the first race for the Whip does not appear to have been run till 1756, when Mr. Fenwick's Match'em won from Mr. Bowles' Trajan.

Gimcrack, Mambrino, Shark, Pot-8-os, Dunggannon, Thormanby, and many other famous horses have run for the Whip. The course is the Beacon, 4 miles 1 furlong 177 yards, and the weight to be carried is 10 stone.

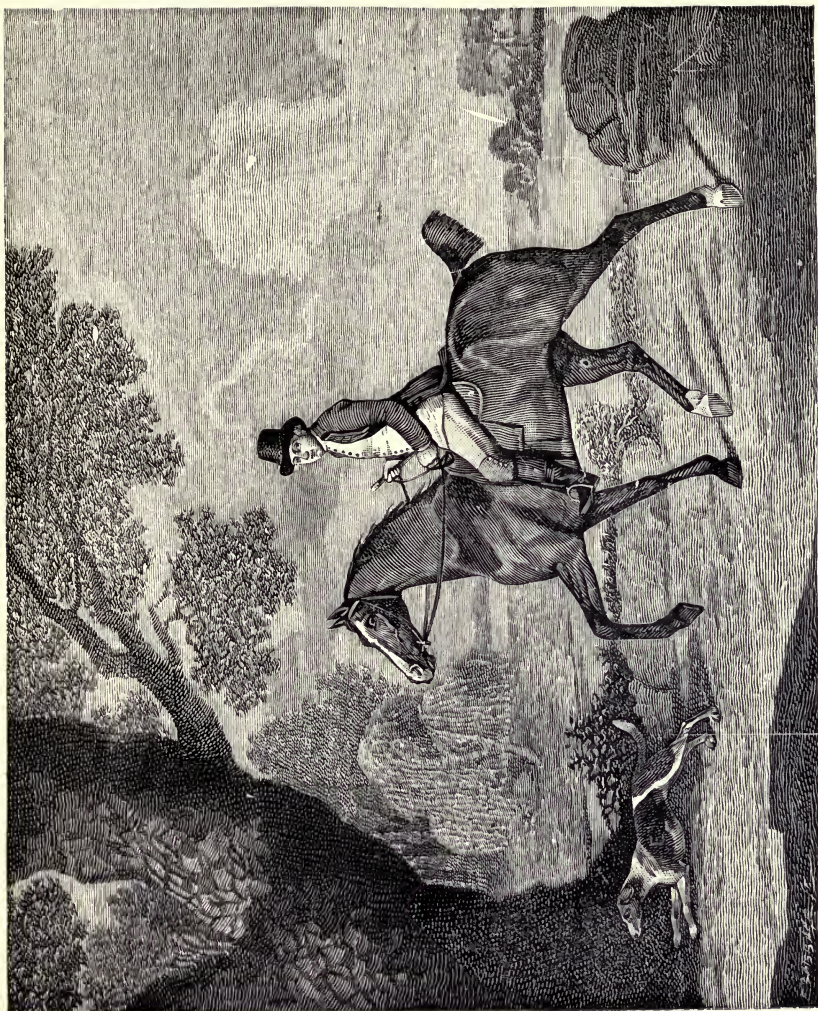
The tendency for years has been in favour of short races at the expense of long distance events. At the Newmarket Craven meeting of 1820 there was one race of about three miles, five races of two miles or over, twenty of about one mile and two of under one mile. At the Newmarket Craven meeting of 1900 there were three races of about one mile and a half, six of about one mile, and eleven of five or six furlongs. The necessity for breeding race horses that could carry from ten to twelve stone twice or thrice in an afternoon over a four-mile course has disappeared altogether. In his place we have the animal which can carry seven stone over six or seven furlongs at a pace that would probably have left Eclipse hopelessly behind, but which is useless for any purpose off the race-course.

The highly artificial existence to which our race horses are now subjected, jealously protected from change of temperature, and "forced" in preparation to take part in two-year-old races, has done much to impair

fitness to beget horses that will stand work in the hunting field or on the road. This is a result of the changes which have come over the English Turf during the century. We must, however, retrace our steps and glance at the endeavours to improve our horses which have been made within the last thirty years.

The year 1873 saw the appointment of the Select Committee generally known as Lord Rosebery's Committee "to Enquire into the Condition of the Country with regard to Horses, and its Capabilities of Supplying any Present or Future Demands for them." This committee did not consider the question of Racing; their labours during their sixteen sittings were restricted to eliciting facts from the witnesses concerning the breeding and supply of horses of the generally useful stamp; and much valuable evidence was given before them. To summarise them briefly, the main points of their Report were as follows:—

The Committee considered that so far as the Army was concerned it seemed to be admitted that the mounted branches were never better horsed than they were now: Mr. H. R. Phillips had given evidence that Irish mares were chiefly used in the



THE HACK HUNTER.

From a Painting by GEORGE STUBBS, R.A., 1793.)

Army. They were not prepared to recommend the formation of Government breeding studs on the Continental plan, deeming it better that the military authorities should continue to buy as private customers. They did not recommend any check on the use of unsound stallions, though admitting this to be a great evil ; to restrain owners of unsound sires from offering their services for hire would, they thought, be construed as interference with individual liberty ; but, if practicable, they would have prizes given at agricultural shows to sound stallions which covered mares at a low fee.

They also recommended (and this was the only one of their recommendations adopted by the House of Commons) the abolition of taxes on horses which operated as a deterrent to farmers who would otherwise pay more attention to breeding. The evidence given before them showed that there appeared to be no scarcity of Thoroughbreds : high-class hunters had increased in price and more in proportion than other horses, but those who could afford to pay could generally find what they required. There was a general decrease in the number of horses in England ; the evidence pointed to a great scarcity of agricultural horses,

and while the Cleveland Bay and old-fashioned Hackney or Roadster had become extremely rare, we had been obliged of late years to look abroad for supplies of harness horses.

The causes of deficiency in these breeds were (1) the export of mares ; (2) the increased profits accruing to sheep and cattle rearing, and (3) the increased demand for horses, consequent on increased population and augmented wealth, which produced a relative scarcity. The Committee recorded great improvements during the few years preceding in Cornwall and Devon, where formerly few horses had been bred.

The value of the work performed by this Committee was much qualified by the disinclination of its members to hear any evidence which did not bear directly upon Thoroughbreds and the production of saddle horses. Perusal of the mass of evidence given by numerous witnesses shows that the Committee would hear little or nothing in relation to the condition of Harness Horse breeding, apparently holding that very important department of the industry as without the scope of their inquiry. It is difficult to understand why this attitude was adopted, but the published minutes

stand to prove that any witness who ventured to comment upon harness horses and the advisability of stimulating their production, was not encouraged to give information.

What little evidence was accepted in regard to harness horses showed the existence of a growing demand for the best Roadster stock in continental countries. French, Italian, German and Austrian breeders were fully alive to the value of Hackney blood, and their agents coming every year to England for the purpose since about 1840 had purchased all the good stallions they could find to foster and promote the breeding of horses eminently suitable for carriage artillery and transport work.

Mr. J. East, of the firm of Phillips and East, said that the French agents "buy the very best mares they can get ; you cannot get them to buy a bad mare." The late Mr. H. R. Phillips stated in course of his evidence that his firm sent "from thirty to forty of these roadster stallions every year to France and Italy and different countries ; they sent as many as they could procure." When asked how the number of Hackney stallions exported at that date compared with

the number exported ten or fifteen years previously (say about the year 1858), Mr. Phillips replied that the foreigners had always taken as many as they could get.

Horses of roadster stamp are not less necessary to the efficiency of the British army than to Continental armies; but while the Committee displayed the greatest care and assiduity in their investigations concerning the causes of dearth in saddle horses, they passed over the not less important question of harness horse supply, as though holding that a matter of no account.

It is to be regretted that the Committee did not ask questions as to the enormous number of mares purchased for France, Germany, Russia and Austria, and also enquire concerning the use to which the mares are put in those countries. The answers would have been instructive, for it is now well known that fifteen out of every twenty of them were medium and heavy weight hunter mares—many of them stale for riding to hounds, but in every other respect suitable for breeding. These foreign buyers had no prejudices: they bought the mares with the view of breeding stock of the type most suitable for the requirements of their respective countries: the mares had

plenty of thoroughbred blood in their veins, and it remained for breeders to select stallions of the right stamp. Hence the demand from all continental countries for Hackney sires which began sixty years ago and which has continued ever since.

How urgent was the necessity for attention to this department of horse-breeding was very fully demonstrated by Earl Cathcart in a paper¹ which was published in the *Journal* of the Royal Agricultural Society of England about ten years afterwards. Lord Cathcart adopted the practical method of obtaining from friends who had long experience, their opinions on the condition of the breeding of horses other than thoroughbreds ; and the communications sent by these gentlemen make up the bulk of the paper referred to.

There was but one opinion among Lord Cathcart's correspondents who, it must be noted, wrote quite independently of one another. To briefly summarise their statements, they deplored the disappearance of the old-fashioned thoroughbred with bone

¹ "Half Bred Horses for Field and Road ; Their Breeding and Management," *Journal* of the R. A. S. E. vol. xix., part 1, No. xxxvii.

and stamina, and the disappearance of the Cleveland breed and the Hackney of the 'thirties. Many influences had been at work to bring about the regrettable change in the stock of the country.

The spread of railways had put an end to the demand for coach horses and roadsters, and the men who used to ride everywhere in the old days had given up their hardy and enduring saddle horses for the more luxurious seat in the train. At the same time buyers from France, Germany, and other Continental countries, having discovered the willingness of English breeders to part with their breeding stock if sufficiently tempted, purchased every good mare money could command.

Again, the craze for height had done something to impair the merits of what roadsters the foreigners left us. The Clevelands were ruined by crossing with leggy inferior thoroughbreds, whose sole recommendation consisted in their height at the shoulder and which were wanting in every useful quality.

The value of the half-bred hunter was also insisted on by Lord Cathcart's correspondents—all of them men who had right to form an opinion. Mr. Sax Maynard,

who for fifteen years was Master of the North Durham Hounds, laid stress on the "wear and tear" qualities of the hunter got by the old stamp of thoroughbred out of the Cleveland mare, and conversely of hunters got by Cleveland sires out of thoroughbred mares. The superior speed of the thoroughbred was admitted; but the greater endurance of the half-bred hunter in hilly country was a quality which gave him a value which did not attach to the pure thoroughbred.

Nothing more convincing could have been compiled than this essay from several horse-breeding correspondents. It shows clearly how very great is the change which has come over the principal breeding grounds of England during the present reign.

In regard to the disappearance of horses of the useful stamp for harness and saddle it is not necessary to require evidence for the reasons. When we remember how enormous was the network of coach route that spread all over the kingdom in pre-railway days; and consider how vast were the studs necessary to horse the mail and passenger coaches, to say nothing of the post-chaises preferred by people of means; and when we think that the road-coach

survives now only in a few out-of-the-way corners of the country, and is regarded as an interesting relic of by-gone days where it does exist, we can form perhaps a vague idea of the extent of the change. About the year 1830 upwards of 1,040 coaches were running daily out of London alone.

We need not, thanks to "Nimrod" and other chroniclers of the coaching age, remain content with a vague idea of the number of horses then in use on the roads. It is easy to take a single route and reckon up the stud required to work a coach running thereon. The usual "stage" for a team was from eight to ten miles, and making due provision for rests, accidents, &c., the proprietors estimated the needs of a coach at one horse per mile "one way." Therefore a coach running from London to York, 200 miles, and back, required about 200 horses; from London to Edinburgh, 400 miles, and back, about 400 horses; from London to Exeter, 175 miles, and back, about 175 horses.

On roads where the passenger traffic was heavy, coaches were numerous: as many as twenty-five ran daily in the summer during the 'thirties from London to Brighton. The distance by road is about sixty miles,

whence it would seem that no fewer than 1,500 horses were used by the coach proprietors on that route alone ; probably more, as competition was keen and the speed maintained was hard upon horseflesh.

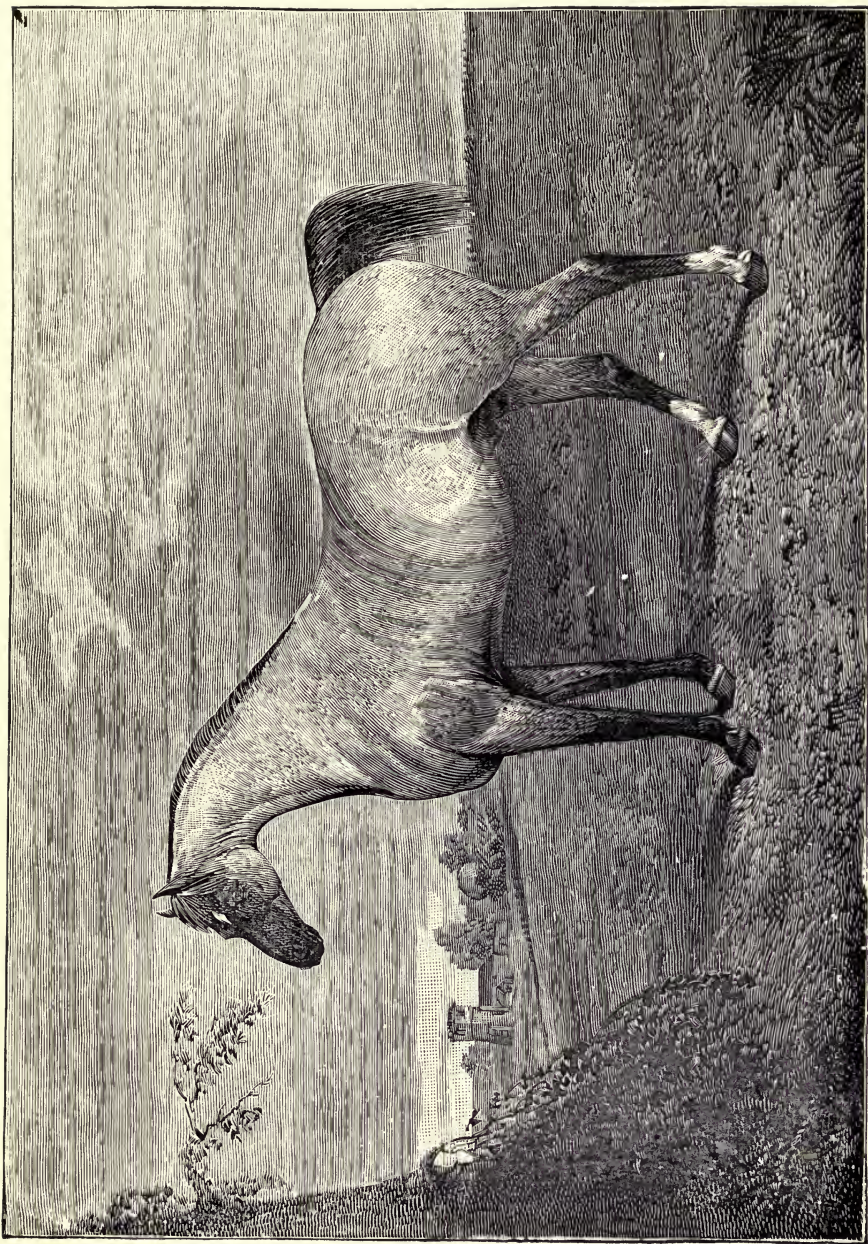
The average working life of a horse in a fast road coach was about four years, according to Nimrod. Hence the coach proprietor found it necessary to renew one fourth of his stud at a cost of from £25 to £45 per head every year. Mr. Chaplin, who owned five "yards" in London in the 'thirties, had upwards of 1,300 horses at work in various coaches on various roads, and would therefore have been obliged to purchase about £11,375 worth of horses every year.

When the railway banished the coach from the highroad, which it did with considerable rapidity, these great coaching studs were necessarily given up, and a market for horses of the most useful stamp disappeared. An eminent proprietor gave the qualities required in a road coach-horse for fast work as follows : "First requisite, action ; second, sound legs and feet, with power and breeding equal to the nature and length of the ground he will work upon ; third, good wind, without which the

first and second qualifications will not avail in very fast work for any length of time. The hunter and racer are good or bad, chiefly in proportion to their powers of respiration; and such is the case with the road-coach horse."

The practical disappearance from our country of such horses as those used in the mail and ordinary coaches and in post carriages was nothing short of a national calamity. They were horses of the essentially useful stamp, sound, hardy and enduring, just such animals as are indispensable for cavalry, artillery, and transport work on a campaign. And though the full importance of the loss which had befallen us was evident, the difficulties in the way of retrieving our position as breeders was not less evident. The breeding of horses had ceased to be remunerative, and as a natural consequence men had ceased to breed them, preferring to devote their energies and capital to stock of a stamp for which they could depend upon finding a market. Any horses of the useful class that were produced found their way, if worth having, into the hands of foreigners, as we have seen.

In March, 1887, Lord Ribblesdale took the matter up and in a very able speech



NORFOLK PHENOMENON (Foaled 1824).

drew the attention of the House of Lords to the question of the "Horse Supply for Military and Industrial Purposes." He rendered a tribute to the work that was being done by private persons and by societies and associations, thanks to whose endeavours the breeders of Shire horses and Clydesdales were prospering. The brisk foreign demand for British stock proved its merit, but so long as halfbred horses suitable for remounts and all useful purposes were as scarce as they were, while we were importing horses to the value of over a quarter of a million sterling annually, including harness-horses and match pairs of carriage-horses, we had evidence that we were not breeding high class horses up to the demand for our own daily increasing needs.

He urged that the money given in Queen's Plates be diverted from its then use and devoted to subsidising approved stallions, which should serve at low fees; and that large prizes should be offered from the public purse for foals, yearlings, and two-year-olds. As regarded military horses he advised the purchase of two-year-olds to be kept at maturing *depôts* till old enough to take in hand; and in recommending the system of direct purchase from the breeder

referred to the fact that direct purchase was approved by Baron Nathansius, the French Inspector General of Remounts, in a letter which that officer had addressed to the present writer.

Lord Ribblesdale paid me the compliment of seeking my assistance in his task: and in order to obtain the actual views of the horse-breeding interest in England, Colonel Sir Nigel Kingscote, Sir Jacob Wilson and the writer met in February, 1887, and drew up a series of questions.

These questions were printed and sent out to between three and four hundred of the best known horse-breeders in the Kingdom; to all, in point of fact, whose experience would lend weight to their views and whose addresses could be secured. The principal questions put were as follows:—

“Q. 1. Assuming that an annual Grant from the Government of £5,000 be made for the encouragement of the breeding of halfbred horses, to whom in your opinion ought such grant to be entrusted for distribution? Whether to a specially constituted Board of Trustees or to any other body?

“Q. 2.—Is it your opinion that the distribution of the above Grant should take the form of a subsidy in the shape of Premiums for Thoroughbred Stallions covering at a moderate fee similar to those offered by the Hunters' Improvement Society at their Annual Spring Show, and this year by the Royal Agricultural Society at Newcastle?”

In answer to Question 1, 194 replies were received in time for tabulation; of these 79 were in favour of the grant being distributed by a specially constituted Board of Trustees; 60 were in favour of its distribution by the Royal Agricultural, Hibernian and Caledonian Societies; 33 preferred that the duty should be vested in local and county societies, and 22 offered no opinion.

Of answers to Question 2, 113 were in the affirmative, 44 replied "No," and partial concurrence was expressed by 19; a few gentlemen advised subsidising roomy half-bred mares. The body of opinion so collected and tabulated was placed in Lord Ribblesdale's hands about the end of April; but not until August did opportunity occur for him to ask in the House of Lords whether the Government proposed to take any action in the matter. He referred briefly to the fact that the breeders of the Kingdom had been circularised on the subject, but omitted to support his enquiry by any analysis of the very important and valuable mass of expert opinion thus placed at his disposal.

It is quite probable that during the months which elapsed between receipt of the information we had collected for him and the

date of his August speech, Lord Ribblesdale had made use of them to influence the Government in the desired direction; for the speech appeared to be framed solely for the purpose of affording Lord Salisbury opportunity to declare the intentions of his Government.

In brief, the Premier announced that it was proposed to devote the money theretofore given as Queen's Plates to breeding; that this sum, £3,000 a year, would be made up to £5,000 by a small addition to the Estimates; and that it was proposed to assign the duty of administering the fund to an independent Trust. The Royal Commission on Horse Breeding was appointed, consisting of the Duke of Portland, the Earl of Coventry, Lord Ribblesdale, Mr. Chaplin, M.P., Mr. F. G. Ravenhill, Mr. John Gilmour, Sir Jacob Wilson and Mr. Bowen Jones; and, acting in concert with the Royal Agricultural Society, the Commissioners, in December, 1887, issued their first Report.

This document stated that only in recent years had any further necessity arisen to encourage breeding apart from private enterprise; the scarcity of horses was due, in their opinion, to the creation of large breeding studs by foreign Governments, who

came to us for their stock and caused a drain upon our resources.

The Commission reported "there was little doubt that the Queen's Plates had failed to fulfil their purpose;" but perhaps it had been nearer the mark to say that the Royal Plates had *ceased* to fulfil their original purpose, owing to the multiplication of valuable stakes which reduced the Royal hundred-guinea prizes to third-class rank and rendered them useless as factors in the encouragement of breeding. The Commission recommended the abolition of the Royal Plates and the application of the money thereto devoted to a scheme of Queen's Premiums, under which sound and approved thoroughbred sires should stand in specified districts and under control of a local committee, serve mares at a low fee. The scheme was at once adopted, and has worked well in practice.

The year 1896 saw the appointment of the Royal Commission to Inquire into the Horse Breeding Industry in Ireland. Though the enquiry resolved itself into a comparatively narrow issue, a very large amount of evidence, much of it exceedingly interesting and instructive, was recorded. In pursuance of their policy of encouraging the breeding

of all live stock in Ireland, it was proposed to send over selected stallions, thoroughbred and roadster, for the use of owners of mares in the horse-breeding districts. There was much diversity of opinion on the propriety of establishing hackney sires in a country so famed for its hunters, and the principal object of the Commission was to take the opinions of experts on the proposed step.

While the majority of witnesses were averse from the introduction of the hackney sire, on the ground that the happy-go-lucky methods of the small Irish farmer would lead to intermingling of blood to the ultimate deterioration of the Irish hunter, it was generally acknowledged that the bone and substance of the hackney was eminently desirable in many districts to improve the character of the local stock.

.. Could a workable system of mare registration have been devised to prevent hunter mares being sent to hackney sires in those counties where hunter-breeding is a valuable industry, there can be no doubt that the introduction of such sires would lay the foundation in Ireland of the breed of high class harness-horses in which Britain is so singularly deficient, and which could be produced in Ireland with as much, if not greater,

success, as they are produced on the Continent.

Her Majesty's reign has seen the rapid growth of demands from every civilised country in the world for British horses of every breed, eloquent proof of the esteem in which our horses are held abroad and of the success which has attended our endeavours to improve them.

We have, it must be confessed, "gone back" in our department of horse-breeding; the supersession of coaches and their teams of fast and enduring horses by railway traffic has brought about neglect of this most useful stamp of animal. The tens of thousands of coach horses formerly required created a large and valuable industry, and it is only in the natural order of things that when railways made an end of the coaching era that horse-breeders should have turned their energies into new channels.

It is only within recent years that breeders have recognised how much combined and systematic endeavour can do to assist them in their task of improving our several breeds; and it is worth observing that the most important societies for the promotion of horse-breeding (apart from the General Stud Book) were all founded in the short space of nine

years, one after the other, till at the present day every breed is represented by a body whose sole aim is to care for its interests.

LIGHT HORSES.

The Hunters' Improvement Society, founded 1885. Secretary, Mr. A. B. Charlton, 12, Hanover Square, London, W.

The Hackney Horse Society, founded 1884. Secretary, Mr. Euren, 12, Hanover Square, W.

The Cleveland Bay Horse Society, founded 1884. Secretary, Mr. F. W. Horsfall, Potto Grange, Northallerton, Yorks.

The Yorkshire Coach Horse Society, founded 1886. Secretary, Mr. J. White, Appleton Roebuck, Yorkshire.

The Trotting Union of Great Britain and Ireland, founded 1889. Secretary, Mr. E. Cathcart, 7, Trinity Square, Brixton, London.

The Polo Pony Society, founded 1894. Secretary, Mr. A. B. Charlton.

The New Forest Pony Society, founded 1891. Secretary, Mr. H. St. Barbe, Lymington, Hants.

The Shetland Pony Society, founded 1891. Secretary, Mr. Robert R. Ross, 35, Market Street, Aberdeen.

HEAVY HORSES.

The Shire Horse Society, founded 1878 (as the English Cart Horse Society ; name changed in 1884). Secretary, Mr. J. Sloughgrove, 12, Hanover Square, W.

The Suffolk Horse Society, founded 1891. Secretary, Mr. Fred Smith, Woodbridge, Suffolk.

The Clydesdale Horse Society, founded 1883. Secretary, Mr. Archibald MacMilage, 93, Hope Street, Glasgow.

London Cart Horse Parade Society, founded 1885. Secretary, Mr. Euren, 12, Hanover Square, London, W.

The dates when these Societies were established are given, as the information eloquently bears out that passage in the Report of the Royal Commission on Horse-breeding which refers to private enterprise.

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